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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (for the period from 7 June to 31 December 2007)

I. Introduction

1. The present report gives an account of the activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) during the past six months pursuant to the mandate contained in Security Council resolution 350 (1974) and extended in subsequent resolutions, most recently resolution 1759 (2007) of 20 June 2007.

II. Situation in the area and activities of the Force

2. During the period under review the ceasefire in the Israel-Syria sector was maintained and the UNDOF area of operation remained generally quiet. UNDOF supervised the area of separation by means of fixed positions and patrols to ensure that military forces of either party were excluded from it. The Force also carried out fortnightly inspections of equipment and Force levels in the areas of limitation. Liaison officers from the party concerned accompanied the inspection teams. During the period under review, a significant increase in Israel Defense Forces (IDF) training activities was observed on the Alpha side. As in the past, both sides denied inspection teams access to some of their positions and imposed restrictions on the Force's freedom of movement; IDF imposed additional restrictions during its training exercises. During the same period, both sides constructed new, and renovated existing, defensive positions in the respective areas of limitation. UNDOF adjusted its monitoring activities, adopting a more flexible monitoring and patrolling posture, and increased its observation, mobile and night operational activities. The Mission also reinforced its liaison with the parties in order to help maintain stability in its area of operation. Israeli national customs officials continue to operate periodically at the IDF post at the UNDOF crossing gate between the Israeli-occupied Golan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

3. The Force continued to assist the International Committee of the Red Cross with the passage of persons through the area of separation. During the past six months, UNDOF assisted in the crossing of 637 students, 500 pilgrims, five civilians and one bride. UNDOF also provided health services to 243 villagers in the area of separation, and medical treatment to 116 civilians.

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4. In the area of operation, especially in the area of separation, mines continued to pose a threat to UNDOF personnel and local inhabitants. Owing to the long-term presence of the mines and the deterioration of their detonation systems, this threat has increased. UNDOF continued to carry out operational mine clearance. It remained available to support the United Nations Children's Fund in activities to promote mine awareness among the civilian population.

5. The Force Commander and his staff maintained close contact with the military authorities of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic. Both sides generally cooperated with the Force in the execution of its tasks.

6. As at 1 November 2007, UNDOF comprised 1,043 troops, from Austria (372), Canada (2), India (191), Japan (30), Poland (353) and Slovakia (95). A total of 15 personnel were employed by Japan as a national support element. In addition, 75 military observers from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) assisted the Force in carrying out its tasks.

III. Financial aspects

7. By its resolution 61/287 of 29 June 2007, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of $39.6 million, equivalent to $3.3 million per month, for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of the Force beyond 31 December 2007, as recommended in paragraph 12 below, the cost of maintaining the Force would be limited to the monthly amounts approved by the General Assembly.

8. As at 31 August 2007, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNDOF Special Account for the period from the inception of the Force amounted to $24.0 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date amounted to $2.5 billion. As at 31 October 2007, amounts owed to troop contributors for UNDOF totalled $2.0 million. Troop and contingent-owned equipment costs have been reimbursed for the periods up to 31 August and 30 June 2007, respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

IV. Implementation of Security Council resolution 338 (1973)

9. The Security Council, when deciding in its resolution 1759 (2007) to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a further period of six months, until 31 December 2007, also called upon the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973), and requested the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of the period, a report on developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement that resolution. The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, in particular the efforts undertaken at various levels to implement resolution 338 (1973), was addressed in the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Middle East (A/62/327), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 61/26 and 61/27.

V. Observations

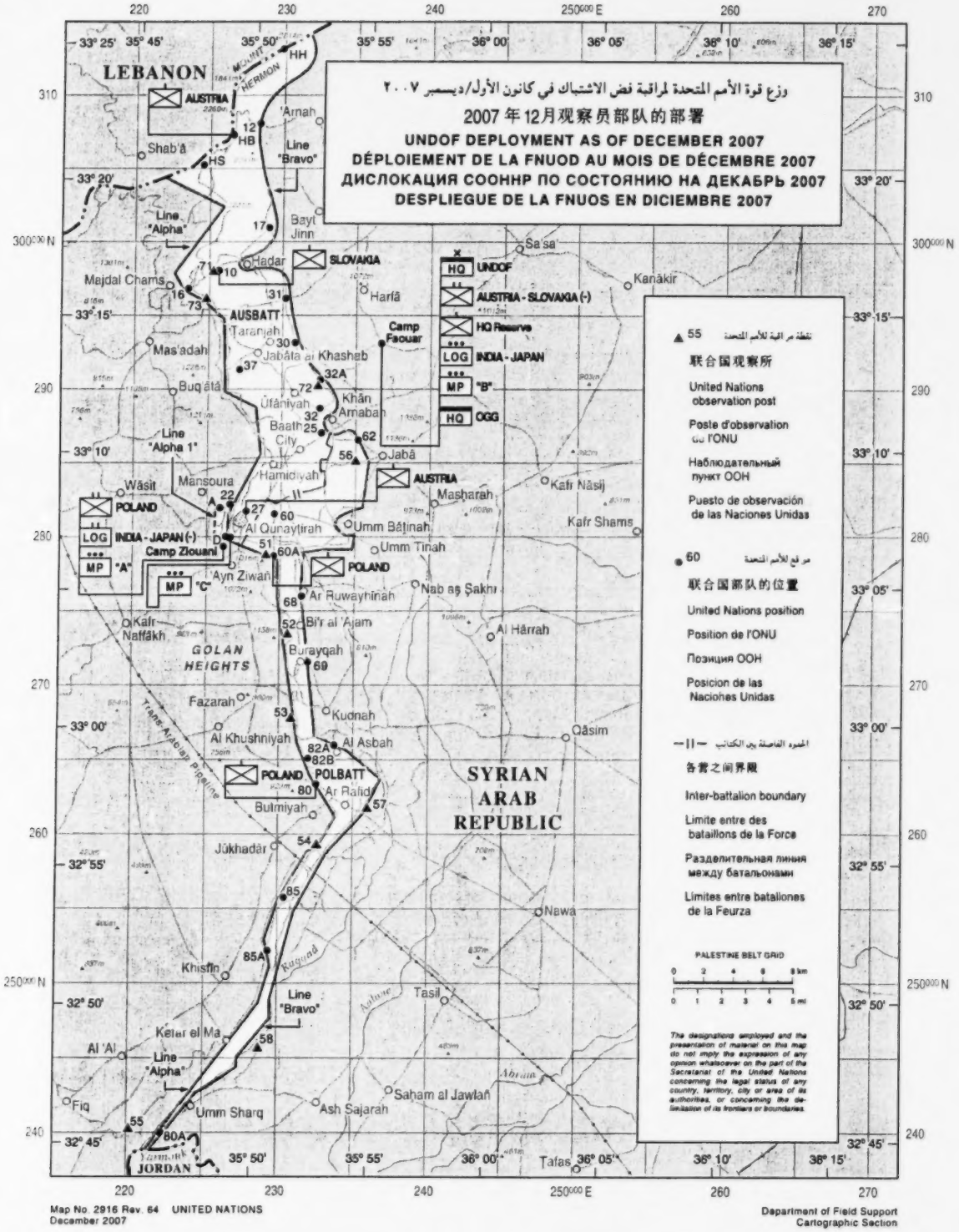
10. The situation in the Israel-Syria sector has remained generally quiet. UNDOF, which was established in May 1974 to supervise the ceasefire called for by the Security Council and the agreement on disengagement between Syrian and Israeli forces of 31 May 1974, has continued to perform its function effectively, with the cooperation of the parties.

11. Nevertheless, the situation in the Middle East is tense and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached. I hope that determined efforts will be made by all concerned to tackle the problem in all its aspects, with a view to arriving at a just and durable peace settlement, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 338 (1973).

12. Under the prevailing circumstances, I consider the continued presence of UNDOF in the area to be essential. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the Force for a further period of six months, until 30 June 2008. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has given its assent to the proposed extension. The Government of Israel has also expressed its agreement.

13. In making this recommendation, I must draw attention to the shortfall in the funding of the Force. The unpaid assessment amounted to some $24.0 million as at 31 August 2007. The sum represents money owed to the Member States that contribute the troops who make up the Force.

14. In conclusion, I wish to pay tribute to Major General Wolfgang Jilke and to the men and women serving with UNDOF and UNTSO. They have performed with efficiency and devotion to duty the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Governments contributing troops to UNDOF, and to those that provide the UNTSO military observers assigned to the Force.


وزع قوة الأمم المتحدة لمراقبة فض الاشتباك في كانون الأول/ديسمبر ٢٠٠٧
2007 年 12月观察员部队的部署
UNDOF DEPLOYMENT AS OF DECEMBER 2007
DÉPLOIEMENT DE LA FNUOD AU MOIS DE DÉCEMBRE 2007
ДИСЛОКАЦИЯ СООННР ПО СОСТОЯНИЮ НА ДЕКАБРЬ 2007
DESPLIEGUE DE LA FNUOS EN DICIEMBRE 2007
LEBANON
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
JORDAN
GOLAN HEIGHTS
AUSTRIA
SLOVAKIA
AUSBATT
POLBATT
POLAND
INDIA - JAPAN
HQ UNDOF
AUSTRIA - SLOVAKIA (-)
HQ Reserve
INDIA - JAPAN
MP "B"
HQ OGG
Camp Faouar
Camp Ziouani
MP "A"
MP "C"
LOG INDIA - JAPAN (-)
Line "Alpha"
Line "Alpha 1"
Line "Bravo"
Trans-Arabian Pipeline
Hadar
Majdal Shams
Shab'ā
'Arnah
Bayt Jinn
Harfā
Sa'sa'
Kanākir
Mas'adah
Buq'ātā
Jabāta al Khashab
Khān Arnabah
Ufāniyah
Baath City
Jabā
Hamidiyah
Mansoura
Wāsit
Masharah
Kafr Nāsij
Kafr Shams
Al Qunaytirah
Umm Bāṭinah
Umm Tīnah
'Ayn Ziwān
Ar Ruwayhinah
Nab aṣ Ṣakhr
Kafr Naffākh
Bi'r al 'Ajam
Al Hārrah
Burayqah
Fazarah
Kudnah
Qāsim
Al Khushniyah
Al Asbah
Ar Rafid
Butmiyah
Jūkhadār
Nawā
Khisfīn
Tasil
Ketef el Ma
Al 'Al
Fiq
Umm Sharq
Ash Sajarah
Saham al Jawlān
Tafas
PALESTINE BELT GRID
The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.
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Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section